United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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3 June 1994

F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

+ IAEA Director-General Hans Blix briefs Security Council on lack of cooperation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea regarding verification of its past nuclear activities.

+ Friends of Secretary-General on Haiti reiterate support for return of President Aristide and for economic sanctions against country; call on Haitian military to surrender power immediately.

+ Secretary-General appeals for contributions to voluntary account which financed UNFICYP prior to June 1993, citing shortfall of $194 million; says troop contributors have not been reimbursed since 1982.

+ In report to Security Council, Secretary-General says Cyrus Vance will continue to mediate between Greece and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; parties to meet in New York on 16 June.

+ Secretary-General to visit Geneva next week for seventy-fifth anniversary of ILO; to attend OAU Summit in Tunis on 16 June.

+ UNAMIR halts civilian exchanges after convoy fired on in Kigali; 250 displaced persons to safety before incident.

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The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Hans Blix, today briefed the Security Council on the lack of cooperation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with regard to verification of its past nuclear activities. He told correspondents at Headquarters that the Agency had not concluded that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had one or more nuclear weapons nor that its nuclear programme was being used for non-peaceful purposes. However, Mr. Blix emphasized that the IAEA could not verify the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's declarations regarding its discharge operations and, therefore, could not say whether nuclear material had been diverted for plutomium production.

Mr. Blix said as a result of the discharge operations at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's five megawatt nuclear reactor, the opportunity for meaningful analysis had been lost. He stressed that the Agency had not

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objected to the discharge of the fuel in the reactor, but to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's failure to go along with IAEA safeguard measures. As a result, there was uncertainty about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's past nuclear programme.

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The Friends of the Secretary-General on Haiti today reiterated their determination to bring about a rapid return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and a restoration of constitutional order, as provided for in the Governors Island Agreement. In a meeting at Headquarters presided over by Special Envoy Dante Caputo, the Friends -- Argentina, Canada, France, the United States and Venezuela -- called on the Haitian military and its "latest purported government" to surrender power immediately.

Condemning systematic human rights violations by the authorities in Haiti, the Friends expressed their strong commitment to economic sanctions against that country. They welcomed the Dominican Republic's decision to seal its border with Haiti and said they were willing to consider further measures, such as the suspension of commercial flights and the banning of international financial transactions. The Friends stressed that after President Aristide's return, considerable support would be needed to ensure the restoration of democracy and national reconciliation. They agreed to start contingency planning for assistance with free elections, the strengthening of the judiciary and democratic institutions. Finally, the Friends expressed their determination to promote the full deployment of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) as soon as conditions permitted.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appealed for financial contributions to the voluntary account for the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). In a letter to Member States dated 17 May, he said the account which handled voluntary contributions for UNFICYP prior to 16 June 1993 had a shortfall of $194 million. As a result, the United Nations had only been able to reimburse troop-contributing States up to June 1982. He proposed that States whose current assessment was lower than their previous UNFICYP contributions should now contribute the difference to make up the shortfall.

The Secretary-General said UNFICYP continued to play a vital role in promoting a peaceful political settlement in Cyprus. An unfair financial burden had fallen on States which supported the Force when it was financed entirely by voluntary contributions. He asked Members to respond generously to his appeal.

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Cyrus Vance will continue his mission of good offices with a view to resolving the differences between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a report

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to the Security Council dated 27 May, he said Mr. Vance had presented a draft interim accord to the two countries in April. It confirmed their common border as an inviolable international frontier and established measures for confidence-building, friendship and cooperation. The draft aimed to achieve a preliminary agreement on a limited number of issues, including the interpretation of the Constitution of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, hostile propaganda, and "countermeasures" adopted by Greece.

The Secretary-General said that although the two countries had not been able to agree on the draft accord, they had accepted Mr. Vance's invitation to meet in New York on 16 June. He noted that the legality of the countermeasures adopted by Greece in February was being adjudicated in the European Court of Justice. However, he said he did not believe the case would have any direct bearing on Mr. Vance's mission.

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Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali will visit Geneva next week to participate in a special seventy-fifth anniversary session of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on 9 June. He will also meet with the newly appointed Special Envoy for Yemen, Lakhdar Brahimi, on 6 and 7 June to discuss the situation in that country.

The Secretary-General will leave Geneva for Tunis to attend the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit on 13 June, where he will consult with officials on a number of African issues, including Rwanda.

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The United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) today moved some 250 civilians from a stadium and a church in Kigali across the confrontation line between the Government and the Rwandese Patriotic Front. It was the first time people had been able to leave the church, where an estimated 5,000 to 7,000 people had taken refuge, according to a United Nations spokesman.

However, further scheduled exchanges had to be cancelled when a UNAMIR convoy came under fire while passing through a Government-controlled area in the city. The Deputy Force Commander of UNAMIR was also fired on while investigating that incident.

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6 June 1994

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ General Assembly President opens World Hearings on Development; citing example of D-Day, says forum could be turning-point in war against poverty.

+ Secretary-General, beginning visit to Geneva, discusses Bosnian peace process with Thorvald Stoltenberg and Special Representative Akashi.

+ Special Representative Akashi meets with Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serb delegations as cease-fire talks begin in Geneva.

+ Government of Yemen informs Secretary-General that cease-fire will begin at midnight tonight; seeks help in fighting Aden refinery fire.

+ Member States owe United Nations $2.9 billion as of 31 May; $957 million owed to regular budget and $1.9 billion to peace-keeping.

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General Assembly President S.R. Insanally (Guyana) today opened the World Hearings on Development at Headquarters. Observing that today was the anniversary of D-Day, the turning-point of the Second World War, he expressed the hope that the Hearings would mark the turing-point in the war against poverty and social malaise. He said only in the United Nations could development be merged with political matters, and warned that the work of the Organization would unravel without a strong commitment to both.

The Hearings are being held against the backdrop of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's recent report "An Agenda for Development", which warns that development is receding from the international agenda in an era of sweeping technological and economic change. In an address to the Hearings delivered by Special Adviser Ismat Kittani, the Secretary-General said the survival of the human community depended on the adoption of a culture of develpment. He stressed that peace and development were mutually supportive, adding that peace would not last long if the efforts of the Blue Helmets were not followed up by development work.

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The Secretary-General emphasized the importance of economic growth for development, saying it was impossible for nations to progress when they had to use foreign exchange earnings to meet old debts and when the pains of adjustment were not eased by develpment assistance. Although governments bore the major responsibility for development, there was no alternative to an active United Nations role, he continued. The Organization could channel funds, provide experts and information, set priorities and standards, and conduct operations in the field.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was in Geneva today, where he met with Thorvald Stoltenberg, Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia, and Special Representative Yasushi Akashi. Mr. Akashi briefed the Secretary-General on ongoing efforts by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to achieve a cease-fire agreement in Bosnia and Herzogovina. The Secretary-General reiterated the importance of achieving a complete cessasation of hostilities as part of an overall political settlement, and assured Mr. Akashi of his continued support.

The Secretary-General later met with Vladimir Petrovsky, Director-General of the United Nations office in Geneva and Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament. Among the topics they discussed were the work of the Conference on Disarmament and preparations in Geneva for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations. Tomorrow, the Secretary-General is expected to meet with his Special Envoy for Yemen, Lakhdar Brahimi, and his Special Representative for Burundi, Ahmedou Ould Abdallah.

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Talks aimed at achieving a cease-fire agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina started today in Geneva, following the withdrawal by Bosnian Serb armed elements from the 3-kilometre exclusion zone around Gorazde, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General's Special Representative for the former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, had separate meetings with delegations from the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serb authorities. The talks are scheduled to continue tomorrow.

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The Government of Yemen today informed Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali that a cease-fire would begin in that country at midnight tonight (2100 GMT), according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General is following developments closely, and has been in contact with Lakhdar Brahimi, his Special Envoy and Head of the fact-finding mission to Yemen, as well as with the parties concerned.

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The spokesman said the Secretary-General had received a request for emergency firefighting support to halt a fire at a refinery in Aden, and had been in touch with concerned States.

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As of 31 May, Member States owed the United Nations a total of $2.9 billion, according to the latest update on the Organization's financial situation. Of that amount, $957 million was for assessments for the regular budget and $1.9 billion was for peace-keeping operations.

The United States -- the largest debtor -- owed almost $300 million to the regular budget, and more than $565 million to the peace-keeping budget, for the current year; it owed more than $230 million and $100 million respectively for prior years. Japan and the Russian Federation had regular budget contributions outstanding for the current year, but not for previous years. However, the Russian Federation owed almost $550 million in total peace-keeping contributions.

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, in Geneva, has meetings with President of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Special Envoy for Yemen and Special Representative for Burundi.

+ Assistant Secretary-General Riza says it will be difficult to get political talks started in Rwanda; Secretary-General's Military Adviser says first phases of UNAMIR could soon be deployed, but shortage of resources and continuing hostilities present serious obstacles.

+ Special Representative Akashi holds second round of talks with Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serbs in Geneva; parties disagree over duration of cease-fire.

+ South Asian and Pacific regional preparatory meeting for 1995 World Conference on Women begins in Jakarta.

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Continuing his visit to Geneva, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met today with Lakhdar Brahimi, his Special Envoy and Head of the United Nations fact-finding mission to Yemen. He appealed to the parties there to abide by the Security Council's call for an immediate cease-fire, and to resume peace talks without delay. The Secretary-General expressed concern at the humanitarian situation in Aden, and has instructed the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and other United Nations offices to respond with emergency action. Mr. Brahimi left for Yemen immediately after the meeting.

The Secretary-General then met with President Kresimir Zubak of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Vice-President Ejup Ganic, to review the current cease-fire talks in Geneva. He later met with the Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), General Bertrand de Lapresle, and the UNPROFOR Commander in Bosnia and Herzegovina, General Michael Rose.

The Secretary-General also met with Special Representative Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, who had just arrived from Burundi. They discussed the political situation there, and the report of the preparatory fact-finding mission,

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comprising Ambassadors Siméon Aké of Côte d'Ivoire and Martin Huslid of Norway. The Secretary-General said he was grateful for Burundi's assistance in dealing with the crisis in Rwanda. He was later scheduled to meet with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Ayala Lasso, to discuss the situation in Rwanda.

Tomorrow, the Secretary-General will attend a ceremony to be held by the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC) marking the first compensation payment for claims resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

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The Assistant Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations, Iqbal Riza, today reiterated the need for a cease-fire and a political settlement in Rwanda, and stressed that success would depend on the will of the parties. However, he told correspondents at Headquarters, contacts between them had only been at the military level to date, and it would be difficult to get political talks started. The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) was unwilling to negotiate with the interim Government because of its involvement in massacres and the question of its legitimacy, while the internal dynamics of the Government side were unclear. "We really don't know who's taking orders from whom," he added.

The Secretary-General's Military Adviser, General Maurice Baril, said he hoped that phases 1 and 2 of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) could soon be deployed. However, it was not yet clear what resources would be available. Ghana and Senegal had each offered one mechanized infantry battalion, but without mechanized equipment, while Ethiopia and Zimbabwe had both offered a battalion. Nigeria, Congo and Mali had each pledged a company of infantry, and Namibia had contributed $500,000. The United States would supply 50 armoured personnel carriers, and various States had offered aircraft, but logistical, maintenance and medical support was still required.

Meanwhile, fighting was continuing on the ground, and Kigali airport had been closed as a result of shelling on Sunday, according to General Baril. Attempts were being made to open up a road corridor from Uganda, and it was possible that UNAMIR could be supplied by air from Zaire and Burundi.

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Special Representative Yasushi Akashi today held another round of bilateral talks with the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serb authorities in Geneva, according to a United Nations spokesman. The main obstacle to an agreement concerned the duration of a cease-fire, with the Bosnian Government favouring a shorter time period than the Bosnian Serbs.

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Meanwhile, the situation in Gorazde remained stable after an exchange of gun-fire between Government and Bosnian Serb forces, the spokesman said. Fighting also flared up north-west of Tuzla, where there had been intense shelling of Government positions by Serb forces in recent days.

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The first of five regional preparatory meetings for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women began in Jakarta, Indonesia, today. The week-long Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development will develop a plan of action for the advancement of women in the region. It will also review progress since the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women was adopted by the General Assembly last year. Other issues to be considered will include women's access to education, participation in the labour force, and political and economic empowerment.

Ministers, senior officials and representatives from non-governmental organizations of 50 countries are expected to attend the meeting, which is being organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Indonesian Government. The results of the five preparatory conferences will be incorporated into the Platform for Action for the World Conference on Women in Beijing.

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